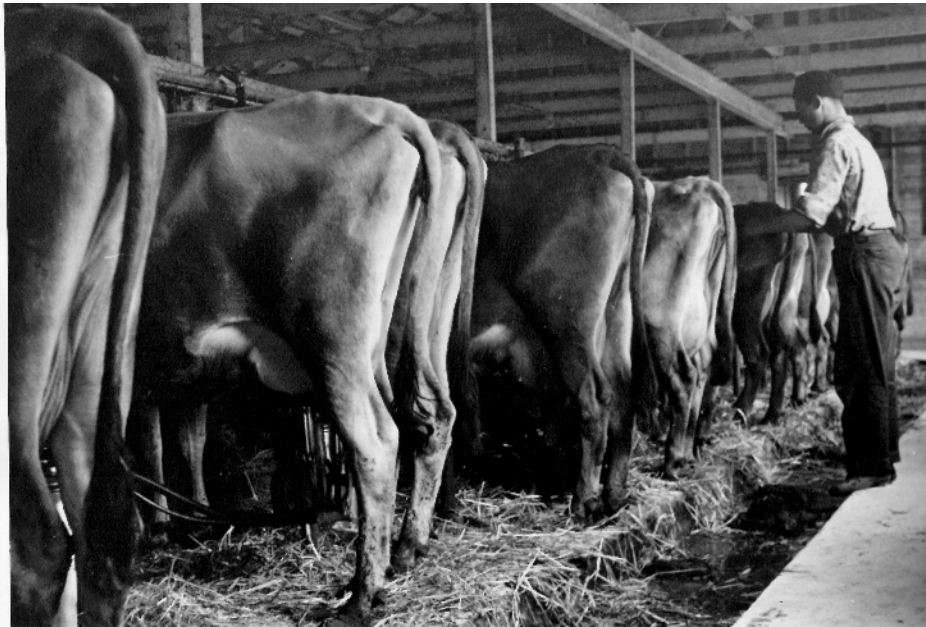
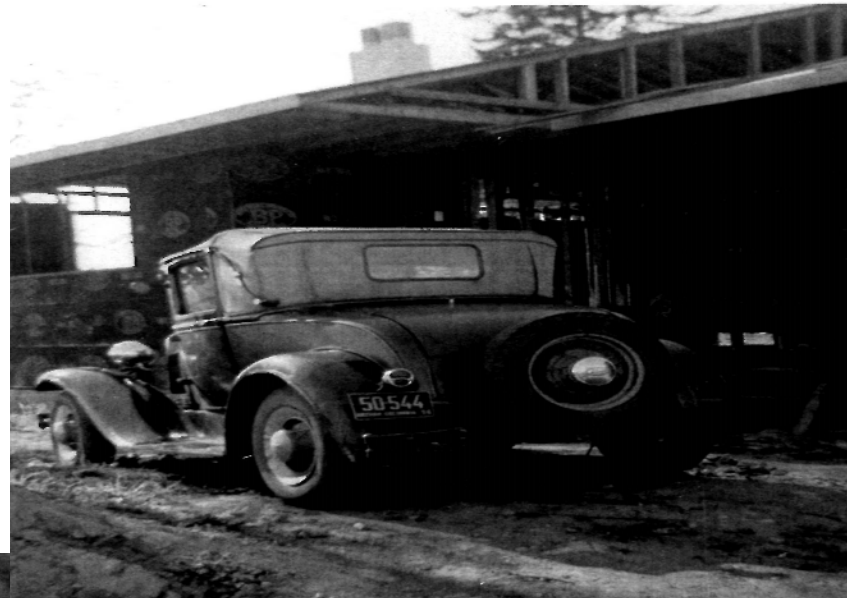


Beckwith Park Farming History

Interview and Historical Photos Shared by Pioneer Jack Burdge



Beckwith Park's Rich Farming Past





North Quadra Community Association



Celebrating 150 years of Farming Ventures and Pioneer Life in North Quadra; specifically Beckwith Valley and Beckwith Park site.

The North Quadra Community Association wishes to thank Saanich's Canada 150 Birthday Committee for helping to fund this celebration project.

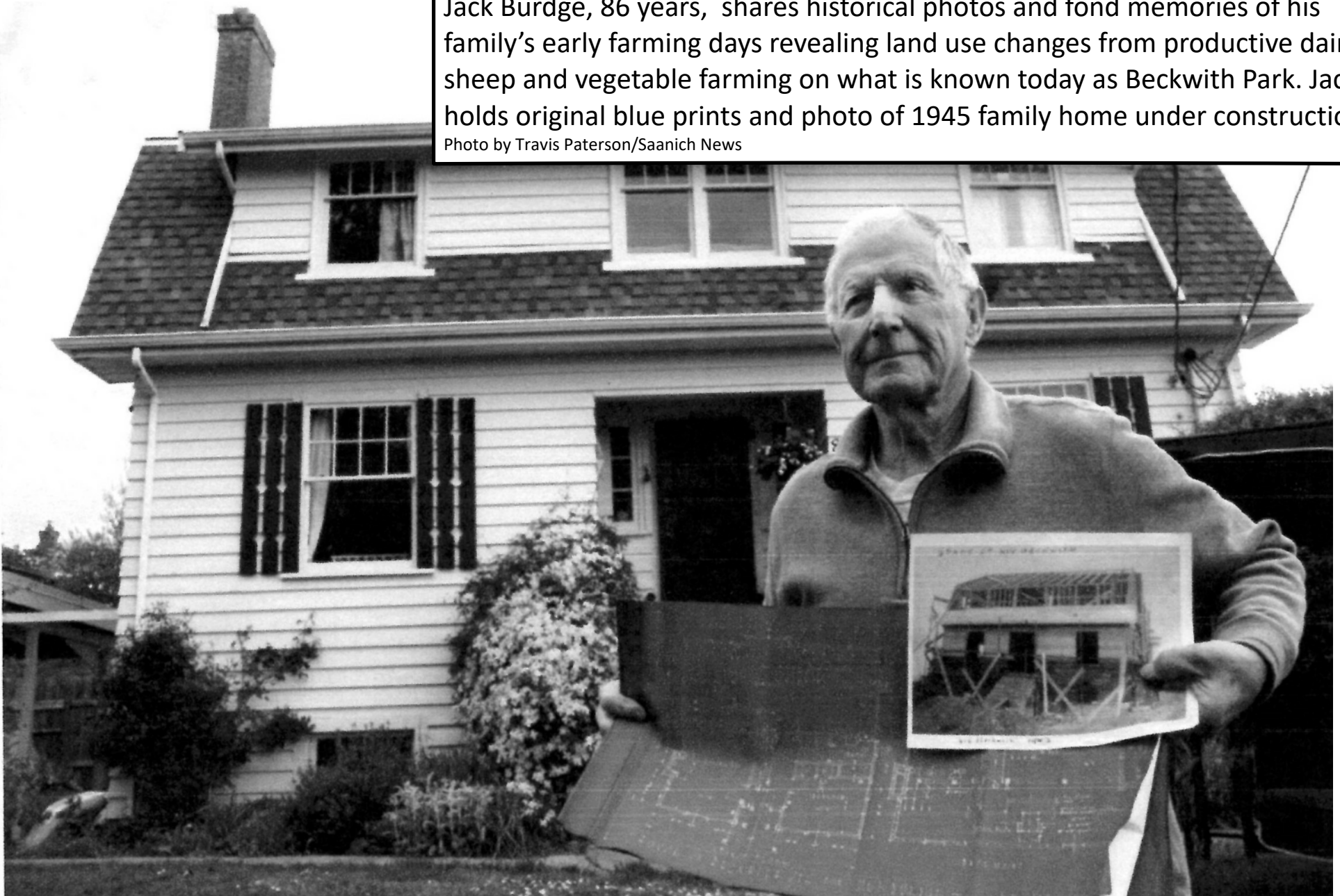
In recognition of Canada's 150th, a heritage activity component was added to NQCA's Beckwith Music In The Park community concert event, July 18, 2017. This event celebrating Canada's pioneer history, featured North Quadra's farming past....the area along Beckwith Avenue located and on Beckwith Park site. The activity included a photo exhibition of historical farming practices, pony rides and a mini petting zoo for kids on the upper basketball field area of the park; the site where the Burdge dairy farm existed.

This photo journal exhibition features historical images and background information relating to the farm families and farming activities along Beckwith Ave . Eighty-six year old Jack Burdge, whose family owned and farmed this park site, graciously agreed to be present for this event, along with his wife Irene of 61 years, to share farming tales of the past and help interpret the exhibition. Jack also generously provided many photos for this presentation. *This journal and action photos of residents/children participating at this July 18, 2017 event are archived on our NQCA website at northquadra.ca .*

**We were saddened to learn of Jack's passing Dec. 10, 2017, only 6 months following his assistance with this project . He was a key figure in ensuring its historical accuracy and success. We were graced to have been gifted of his pioneering knowledge, community contributions and services. -Haji Charania NQCA Pres.*

Jack Burdge, 86 years, shares historical photos and fond memories of his family's early farming days revealing land use changes from productive dairy, sheep and vegetable farming on what is known today as Beckwith Park. Jack holds original blue prints and photo of 1945 family home under construction..

Photo by Travis Paterson/Saanich News



Canada 150th Birthday Retrospective:
Beckwith Park's Farming History



The small white foreground chicken coop shed is site of Beckwith Park basketball court today and the far shed where playgrounds now stand were Jack's favourite hideouts as a child. "I remember calming the chickens by tucking their heads under wings so they would fall asleep" says Jack.

In the front yard of Jack and Irene Burdge's Beckwith Avenue home is a snake-rail fence that shows up in this 1937 photo of the expansive dairy farm. It's the only remaining sections of the old wooden fence that once kept the cows off Beckwith, a dirt road that bisected the farm. "I've moved that fence and other parts of it a few times; it must be 100 years old," said Jack Burdge. In 1945 the Burdges moved into their new farmhouse, where members of the newer generation still live today.

Text courtesy Travis Paterson, Saanich News:Beckwith Farm at the Heart of N.Quadra -May 22/17 www.saanichnews.com/community/beckwith-farm-at-the-heart-of-north-quadra/

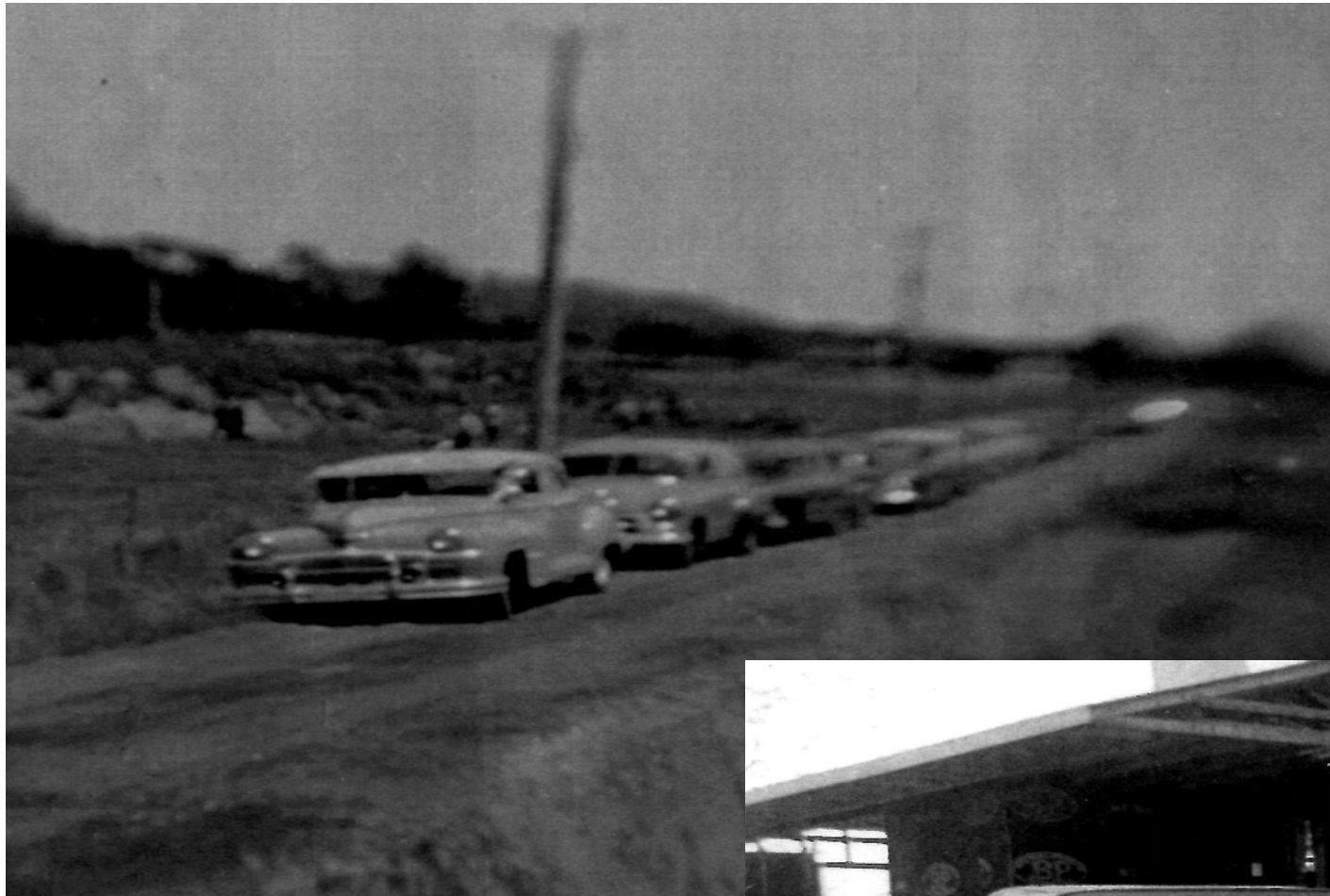




The original herd of 10 Jerseys are being milked in the old barn on Beckwith Ave. At this time the Burdges were still renting the farm land from Josiah Bull Sr.

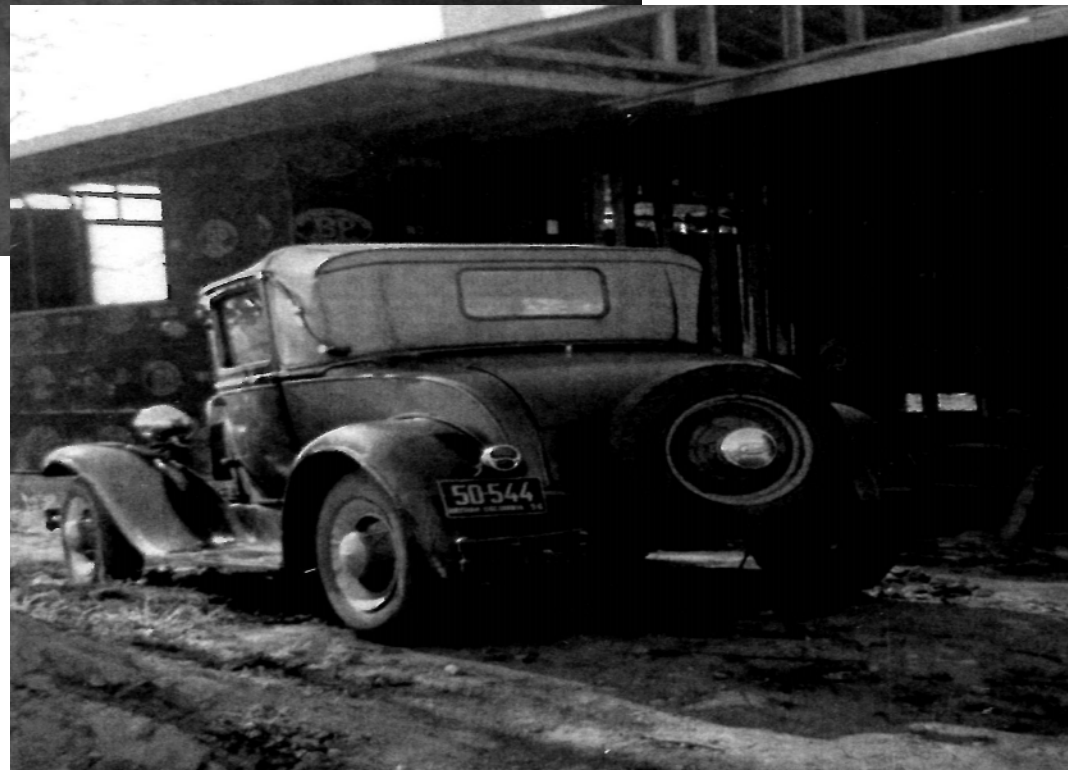
Field to the east of the barn is the site of vast soccer fields and a splash park today. The background treed area, developed in the early 70's now situates residential houses bordering Lucas Ave and Beckwith Place.

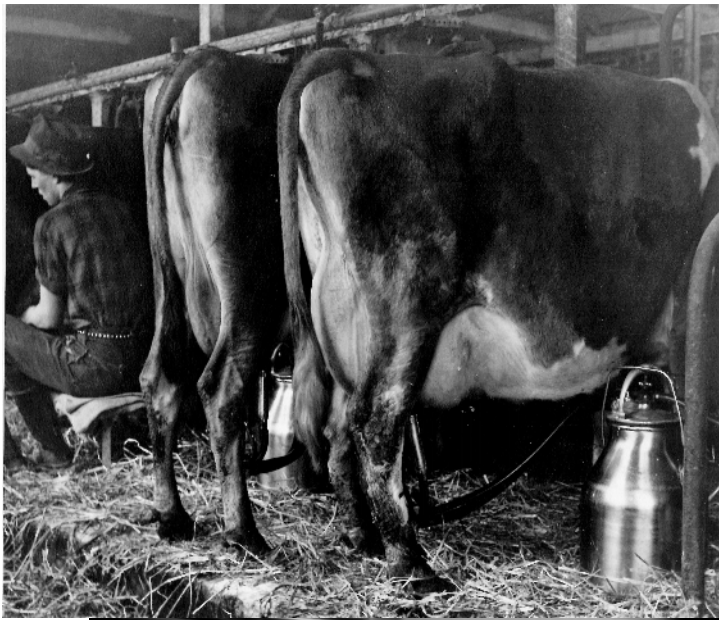




Vehicles are parked along Beckwith Ave during a 1953 tractor demonstration fair . The Burdge family's extensive farming property extended on both sides of Beckwith Ave.

Jack's first car, a 1928 Model A Roadster. No need for driving lessons as he was already driving tractors at a young age.





Out with the OldIn with the New

As a youngster Jack Burdge milked manually until modernization brought in efficiency and higher productivity. While watching Jerseys in the milker, he had to release each cow in a timely fashion to make way for 65 milkers....4 stalls at a time.





The Burdges operated the first milking parlor on Vancouver Island, an impressive automation for its day, becoming the area's top milk producers. Four cows could be milked at once, each supplying approximately 3 gallons, thus yielding 12 gallons within 4 minutes. A herd of 65 dairy cattle would be milked in 2 ½ hours!

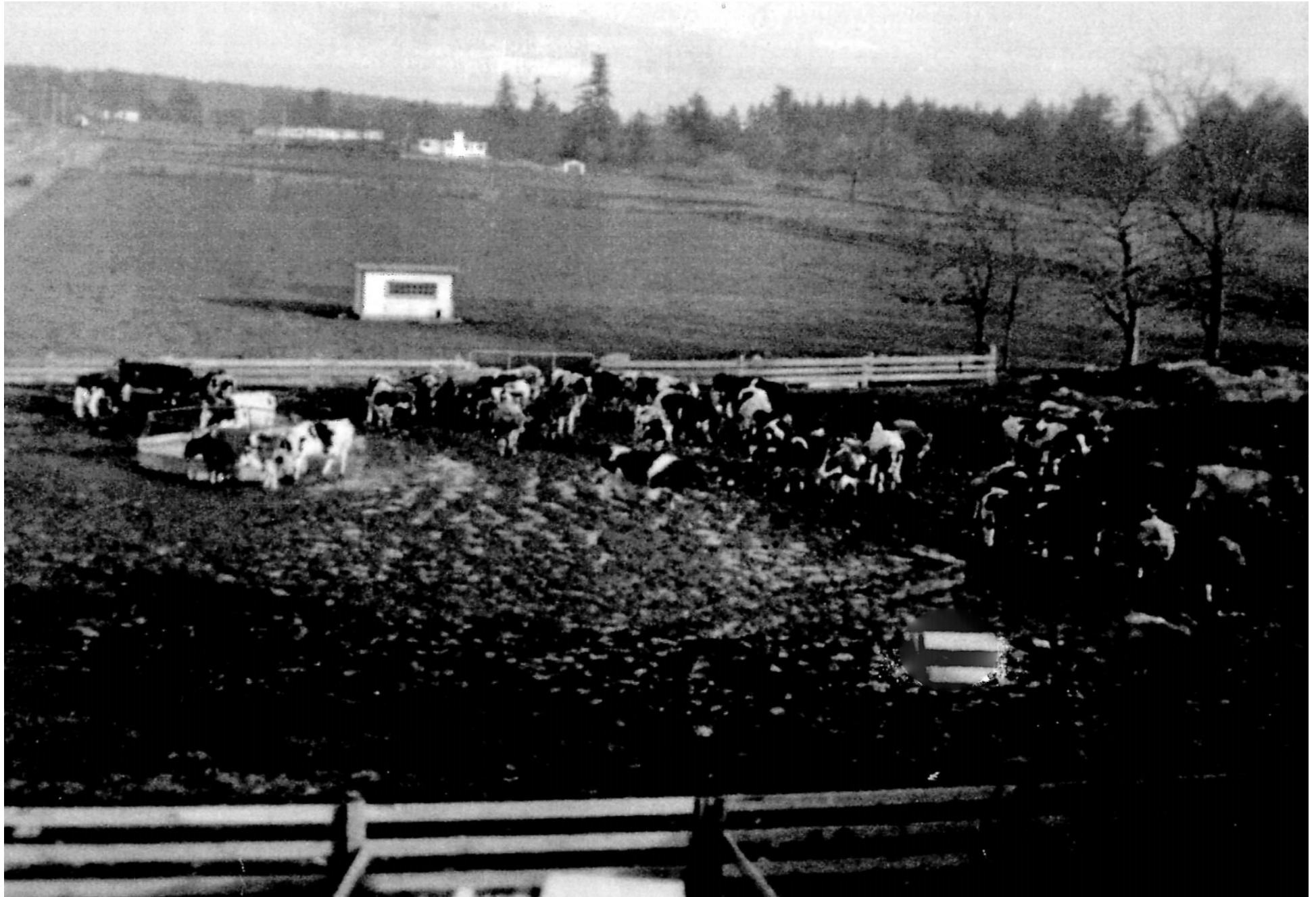


The Burdges delivered milk to homes along Quadra, Cook and Tattersall Streets in their Deaston Dairy family company vehicle. Jack remembers catching a morning ride to Cloverdale school in this truck as his father began milk deliveries but he had to walk home for the entire 2 miles after school.

In 1966 total dairy milk production could peak to 260 gallons a day.



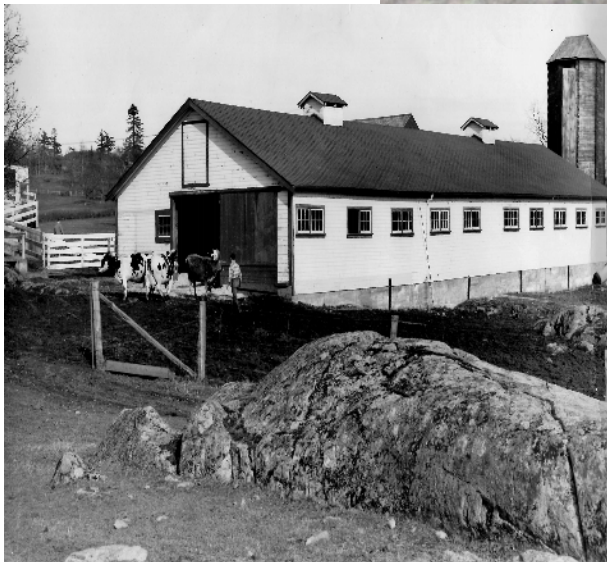
Burdge's 30 head of dairy cattle seen at a water trough on the west end of Beckwith Park adjacent to Beckwith Place.

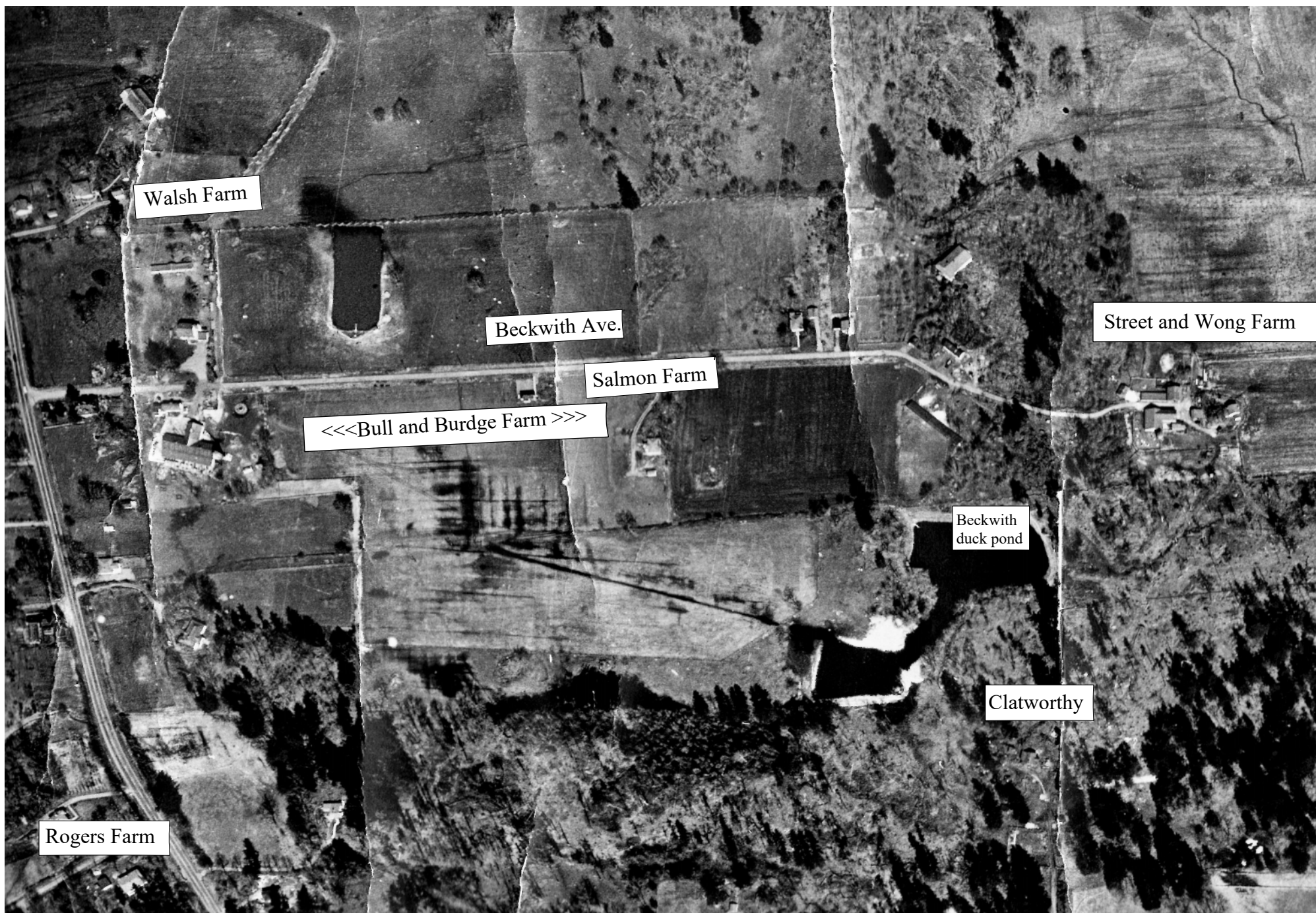


Doug Burdge and wife Enid are cutting oat grass at Rithet's Bog for cow feed to be stored on Beckwith farm property silo. (Below)

The family owned portions of Rithet's Bog for 10 years.

When tractors fell in disrepair, the Burdge brothers often managed their own repairs.





The Burdges knew all the farmers in the Beckwith area, including the Walsh dairy farm, Rogers cattle farm, Wong family veggie farm (which later became the Street farm), Clatworthy farm, Salmon Sheep farm, Doney hog farm and the Locke sheep farm in Broadmead.



Jack Burdge's father, Frank, who farmed in Alberta until 1933 moved his family in 1936 to rent Beckwith Farms from Josiah Bull Sr. They also rented Josiah's 1908 heritage stone farmhouse on Quadra for a period of time until they purchased the land outright in 1945 .

One generation previous to local farmers, Beckwith Park was inhabited by the Kosapsom First Nation who cultivated camas, thimble and salmon berry, among others as a staple food source and used Ocean Spray and Red Osier Dogwood for bow and arrows and tools. These plants grow in abundance today in the natural area surrounding Beckwith pond. Saanich records indicate these farming practices changed with the implementation of Sir J. Douglas's treaty to accommodate Hudson Bay Company settlers.



The Famous Duroid Roof!

The Burdge barn enjoyed a new “discounted” asphalt shingle roof in 1946 in return for company advertising. This roof became a landmark seen from Quadra at Beckwith Ave.

Jack driving a Fordson Major Diesel tractor on Beckwith fields.

